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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES
COOPERATING



STATES RELATIONS SERVICE
OFFICE OF EXTENSION WORK NORTH AND WEST
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THIS LOOKS GOOD

COUNTY AGENTS AID IN COST OF PRODUCTION STUDIES

The growing of sweet corn for canning is one of the important farm enterprises in most of the Maine counties. In 1919 it looked very much as if there would be a decided drop in the price paid for corn by the canners, while it appeared that the cost of production would not be materially lower. The State Sweet Corn Growers' Association asked the State college of agriculture for assistance in determining the cost of producing the crop. A supply of simple record books were printed and distributed by the county agents to farm bureau committeemen in the sweet corn producing areas. These committeemen were instructed how to keep accounts and were requested to get several men in the community to keep records. In the fall each committeeman was asked to call together the men in his community who had kept the accounts. Either the county agent or the State farm management demonstrator attended these meetings and assisted the men in making up a summary showing the cost of each item of labor and material and the quantities of each item involved. Each man then made his own summary. These summaries, ninety-one in all, covered a total of two hundred nine acres and were brought together by counties, and a State exhibit was worked up showing the cost of each item. This tabulation showed a net cost per acre of \$101.63, an average yield of 2758 pounds of cut corn, which would mean .0368 cents per pound. A brief survey of fields over the past five years showed the average would not probably exceed 2,000 pounds per acre, which would mean, when the growers took their chance on average crops, that the cost would be approximately five cents per pound.

This data was furnished to the State Sweet Corn Growers' Association and by them to the packers. Both the President and the Secretary of the State Sweet Corn Growers' Association feel that they would not have been able to secure a price of five cents in 1920, if it had not been for the cost data furnished. They estimate that the five cent price added \$300,000 to the amount paid the owners for the crop.

Similar work has been carried on during the past season involving 131 records, covering 285 acres, showing a cost of \$123 per acre, or an increase of more than \$20 over 1919, due largely to increased labor costs. This data is being used as a basis of negotiation for next year's price.

County Agent Section
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W. J. L.

